



Economic & International Development Department

HISTORIC LANDMARK COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES
1st FLOOR, CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS
CITY HALL BUILDING, 300 N. CAMPBELL
AUGUST 4, 2014
4:00 P.M.

Mayor

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The El Paso Historic Landmark Commission held a public hearing in the City Council Chambers, 1st Floor, City Hall Building, August 4, 2014, 4:00 p.m.

The following commissioners were present:

Chairman David Berchermann

Vice-Chairman Edgar Lopez

Commissioner Beatriz Lucero

Commissioner William C. Helm II

Commissioner John L. Moses

The following commissioners were not present:

Commissioner Randy Brock

Commissioner Cesar Gomez

Commissioner Ricardo Fernandez

The following City staff members were present:

Ms. Providencia Velázquez, Historic Preservation Officer, Economic Development

Ms. Karla Nieman, Assistant City Attorney, City Attorney's Office

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Berchermann called the meeting to order at 4:03 p.m., quorum present.

CHANGES TO THE AGENDA

None.

I. CALL TO THE PUBLIC – PUBLIC COMMENT

None.



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II. REGULAR AGENDA – DISCUSSION AND ACTION

Certificate of Appropriateness

1. **PHAP14-00013:** Being 12 Manhattan Heights All of Block (7500 Sq. Ft.), City of El Paso, El Paso County, Texas
- Location: 3200 Wheeling Avenue
- Historic District: Manhattan Heights
- Property Owner: El Paso Independent School District
- Representative: ASA Architecture
- Representative District: 2
- Existing Zoning: R-3/H (Residential/Historic)
- Year Built: 1920
- Historic Status: Landmark
- Request: Certificate of Appropriateness for changes to previously approved building
- Application Filed: 6/23/14
- 45 Day Expiration: 8/7/14

Ms. Velázquez gave a presentation and noted the applicant is requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness for changes to a structure previously approved by the commission. The proposed facility, not yet under construction, will house a gym, a gathering place, offices, restrooms, and a mechanical room. Today, representatives are requesting commissioners approve new elevation plans for the proposed facility, which are markedly different from the original.

Ms. Velázquez explained the proposed brick and details would match the existing building; however, what is most interesting is the new detailed brickwork on the sides. She pointed out that the new detailed brickwork technique was repeatedly used in the past as a way for the architect to bring details and patterns to the building without too much expense.

The Historic Preservation Office recommends **APPROVAL WITH A MODIFICATION*** of the proposed scope of work based on the following recommendations:

The Design Guidelines for El Paso's Historic Districts, Sites, and Properties recommend the following:

- *All new construction (including detached infill and additions to existing structures) should preserve and enhance the streetscape by appropriately addressing the elements of the historic streetscape. This does not mean that the new structure should appear historic but it should appear aesthetically and architecturally compatible and reinforce the historic properties of the adjacent buildings.*
- *The recurrent alteration of solids and voids (walls to windows and doors) in the façade of a building establishes a pattern. Architectural elements such as walls, porches, dormers, windows and doors should maintain the pattern and rhythm of the existing buildings.*



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The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation recommend the following:

- *New construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property.*
- *The new work shall be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale, and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.*

****THE MODIFICATION IS THAT SEVERAL FIXED WINDOWS BE INSTALLED IN THE EAST FAÇADE WALL FACING COPIA STREET.***

Ms. Velázquez stated the representatives have had several meetings with the Manhattan Heights Neighborhood Association.

Ms. Julie Rutledge, Secretary, Manhattan Heights Neighborhood Association and property owner within the historic district, concurred that the Manhattan Heights Neighborhood Association had met twice with EPISD and representatives. These meetings provided great dialogue and compromise between the parties; however, a number of citizens preferred:

1. incorporating windows into the design somehow;
2. that the trim around the top, the band with the glass block window, and the foundation be smooth, (not rough or incorporated with brick or stone); and
3. that they (trim, band, and foundation) be painted to match.

Commissioner Helm wondered if the additional brick detailing was a result of the meetings between EPISD and the neighborhood association.

Ms. Rutledge responded yes.

Commissioner Helm asked Ms. Rutledge if the previously approved Certificate of Appropriateness included an agreement with the community regarding the location of the facility.

Ms. Rutledge responded yes and explained this location was the neighborhood association's first choice at the time the commission approved the previous Certificate of Appropriateness. However due to the crumbling retaining wall, which EPISD has now rebuilt, this location was approved as the site for the new Multi-Purpose facility.

Regarding the windows, Chairman Berchermann asked Ms. Velázquez how many windows, size and location was she requesting.



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On the façade of the building facing Copia Street, Ms. Velázquez requested a minimum of three fixed windows located above the trim in between the pilasters; however, as this was the area for the proposed gym, she was aware of the safety concerns.

Chairman Berchelmann responded most windows in gyms are very thin and are located near the top of the ceiling, for ventilation.

For additional light, Commissioner Helm suggested larger window openings, to match the pattern suggested by staff perhaps using glass block.

Ms. Velázquez would not recommend glass block; she preferred fixed, impact-glass, single-paned windows; the size of the windows could be negotiated.

For gymnasiums, Vice-Chairman Lopez explained it is very difficult to manage natural light; furthermore, it is dangerous to have glass windows inside gymnasiums. He suggested possibly resetting the panels of brick, one or two inches, to give a shadow line. He asked Ms. Velázquez what material is proposed to be used for the detail on the bottom.

Ms. Velázquez believed it to be concrete with stucco to cover, painted to match the color and surface of the existing building.

Commissioner Helm noted the existing structure is cast stone with stucco to cover.

Mr. Genaro Mier, AIA, Vice-President, ASA Architects, agreed the existing structure contains cast stone; however, over the years, the cast stone was plastered and painted over. He explained the plan is to pour concrete and paint to match the existing school on the bottom and top trim. The copings on top will either be cast stone or sandstone, just the bottom will be plastered and painted. The glass block windows will provide just enough light for visibility.

Vice-Chairman Lopez asked Mr. Mier what the wall mounts above the main entrance were; additionally, Commissioner Helm wondered if those wall mounts were hoods.

Mr. Mier explained the wall mounts are grease hoods for the mechanical system; furthermore, the mechanical system is located on the lower part of the roof, leaving the high roof clean. The ventilators, between the middle deck and reflected ceiling, push the air out. The ventilators will be made of sheet metal, painted to match the school, and are to prevent leaking.

Commissioner Helm referred to the veneer brick with CMU and possible faux windows to face the street.



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Ms. Velázquez clarified she recommended impact glass because it is difficult to break and is used in hurricane areas; however, she concurs with Vice-Chairman Lopez' suggestion of possibly resetting the panels of brick, one or two inches, to give a shadow line.

Mr. Mier noted that through the numerous drawing revisions, he had included shadowing to simulate windows that included changing the color of the brick; however, the reveal was not included. He clarified the purpose of the facility is a gymnasium.

Vice-Chairman Lopez was concerned that, with time, the bump outs will decay. He asked the architects to research the design of the bump outs further.

Mr. Mier stated the bump outs were for ventilation purposes only; furthermore, all mechanical equipment will be located on the lower roof, which will not be seen due to the high parapet. He then explained the location and functionality of the ductwork.

Commissioner Helm suggested placing the relief hoods on the same side of the building as the mechanical equipment.

Mr. Mier responded yes, that could work.

Vice-Chairman Lopez requested the brickwork match the existing structure as closely as possible.

Mr. Mier responded yes, he would match the brickwork as closely as possible.

Chairman Berchermann asked Mr. Mier if he was in agreement regarding moving the vent hoods to the same side as the mechanical equipment.

Mr. Mier responded he was not opposed to the suggestion.

Chairman Berchermann asked Ms. Velázquez if she agreed with the proposed suggestions.

Ms. Velázquez agreed with the proposed suggestions.

Ms. Rutledge commented on the existing inconsistencies of the grout or joint lines and the spacing of the brick. She wondered if there were any specifications for these.

Commissioner Helm replied there are many different styles of mortar for the joints in between the brick.



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Ms. Velázquez noted commissioners could request a specific color for the mortar.

Mr. Mier explained he could not really tell what the treatment of the grout lines was for the existing structure, due to age and wear and tear; however, he has noticed that grout lines were repointed. He will do his best to match the new building with the existing structure as closely as possible.

Commissioner Helm suggested the colored layer, containing the glass block, wraps the pilasters as well, to match the existing structure. For example, if the existing structure has a cast stone layer, the cast stone wraps the pilaster with the brick on the proposed structure.

Mr. Mier was not opposed to the commissioner's suggestion.

PROPOSED SUGGESTIONS

Commissioner Helm requested the cast stone band be modified to wrap the pilasters.

Vice-Chairman Lopez requested the following:

1. relocate or remove the vent hood units on the façade to where the mechanical will be located and match the mortar joints in color and size;
2. recess the window details throughout the four façades; and
3. match the grout lines tooling, depth and color to the existing structure.

MOTION:

Motion made by Vice-Chairman Lopez, seconded by Commissioner Helm AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED TO APPROVE WITH THE FOLLOWING SUGGESTIONS:

1. **REMOVE THE EXHAUST HOODS FROM THE FAÇADES;**
2. **RECESS THE WINDOW DETAILS;**
3. **CONTINUE WITH THE CAST STONE BAND AROUND THE BUTRESSES FOR CONTINUITY; AND**
4. **MATCH THE MORTAR JOINTS IN SIZE AND COLORS, ACCORDING TO THE EXISTING STRUCTURE**

2. **PHAP14-00019:** Being 88 Government Hill 19 & 20 (7000 sq. ft.), City of El Paso, El Paso County, Texas
- Location: 4426 Cumberland Avenue
- Historic District: Austin Terrace
- Property Owner: Mayra Molina
- Representative: Mayra Molina
- Representative District: 2
- Existing Zoning: R-4/H (Residential/Historic)

**Economic & International Development Department****Mayor**

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Year Built: 1939
Historic Status: Contributing
Request: Certificate of Appropriateness for the installation of a secondary driveway in the front portion of the property
Application Filed: 7/21/2014
45 Day Expiration: 9/4/2014

Ms. Velázquez gave a presentation and noted the applicant is requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness for the installation of a secondary driveway in the front portion of the property. The existing eight to nine foot driveway is located on the right side of the property (facing the property). The property owner is requesting a secondary driveway to accommodate two rather large vehicles and to keep the existing driveway. Per the presentation photos, circular driveways were not commonplace within this district.

Per the presentation, Ms. Velázquez gave special note to the rear alley where the existing garage is located. She explained that the existing garage structure could be easily accessed from the alleyway rather than creating the proposed circular driveway in the front. Ms. Velázquez then highlighted the dimensions of the rear alley access to the existing garage structure.

Approximately a year ago, staff recommended denial of a similar request for a Certificate of Appropriateness for a circular driveway, located within the Austin Terrace Historic District. At that meeting, commissioners did not deny the request but suggested the property owner work with the Historic Preservation Office to come up with a solution. The same solution presented to commissioners today is what was proposed previously, which is to access the garage from the rear rather than from the front.

The Historic Preservation Office recommends **DENIAL** of the proposed scope of work based on the following recommendations:

The Design Guidelines for El Paso's Historic Districts, Sites, and Properties recommend the following:

- *Retain historic driveways and walkways, including steps and sidewalks, in their original locations.*
- *Introduce new driveways and walkways (when there are none) that are compatible with existing driveways and walkways in terms of width (maximum 12' wide), location, materials, and design. Double width and circular driveways are not appropriate and require approval from the Historic Landmark Commission.*
- *Construct new driveways and walkways in locations that require a minimum of alteration to historic site features such as landscaping, retaining walls, curbs, and sidewalks. Usually driveways should lead directly to the rear of buildings and walkways should lead directly to the front steps of the house.*
- *Parking areas in front yards are not appropriate. New parking areas should be designed to have a minimal effect on the neighborhood environment.*



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- *Grass and sod may be removed from front yards, side yards on a corner provided not more than 50% of the area is covered with gravel or other masonry. Grass and sod may be removed from parkways provided not more than 50% of the area is covered with gravel or other masonry that is made of impervious materials (brick pavers, and masonry pavers). The remaining 50% must be covered with trees and living plants that provide ground cover.*

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation recommend the following:

- *New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property.*

Chairman Berchelmann asked Ms. Velázquez what the outcome was for the previous request for a circular driveway.

Ms. Velázquez explained the property owner decided not to install the circular driveway; however, the property owner is now trying to address other issues on her property.

Chairman Berchelmann asked Ms. Velázquez if accessing the garage via the alleyway was the appropriate solution to the request.

Ms. Velázquez responded it is the most compatible solution for the historic district. Furthermore, approving a circular driveway would set a precedent for others residing in historic districts.

Chairman Berchelmann concurred with staff's recommendations.

Vice-Chairman Lopez commented on the aesthetics and functionality. He concurred with staff's recommendation to access the garage via the alleyway.

Ms. Mayrna Molina, property owner, and Mr. Rick Martinez, resident, were present and responded to comments and/or questions from commissioners and staff. Ms. Molina distributed handouts to commissioners which she commented on during her discussion. (Copy of handout is on file). Per the 50% landscape requirement, Ms. Molina noted she would have 69% required landscaping with the installation of the circular driveway. She stated that accessing the garage via the alleyway would not be cost effective due to extensive remodeling of the existing rock wall and garage.

Ms. Velázquez asked Ms. Molina when she purchased her home and why she purchased in this historic neighborhood as opposed to anywhere else.



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Ms. Molina responded she bought the house two years ago because she loves the neighborhood and her sister lives two blocks away. She explained that she purchased the property directly from the previous property owner who did not inform her that the home was located within the historic district. Ms. Molina stated she has not received fliers, or any notification regarding historic district property owner meetings, etc.

Commissioner Helm noted the sketch did not incorporate the existing sidewalk dimensions.

Vice-Chairman commented on approving the circular driveway and setting a precedent for the neighborhood. He then suggested diagonal parking that would be accessed from the alleyway.

Ms. Molina and Mr. Martinez were opposed to the diagonal parking suggestion due to security concerns for the vehicles, exposure of their property and cost to renovate the rock wall and garage; however, they were open to other suggestions. Ms. Molina commented on the perceived lack of consistency regarding the guidelines and consistency for properties located within the historic district.

Chairman Berchelmann commented on keeping properties historic within historic districts.

Ms. Velázquez commented on historic district guidelines and compliance with municipal code.

Ms. Molina noted she was not consulted regarding her input for the guidelines. Ms. Velazquez responded that representatives for the historic district had been contacted regarding the guidelines and that a meeting with the residents had been held.

Commissioner Moses asked if it was within the guidelines for the property owner to widen the existing driveway.

Ms. Velázquez responded widening the existing driveway was a consideration; however, she would have to consult the guidelines.

Chairman Berchelmann explained Ms. Molina can appeal the commissioners' decision to City Council for fee, \$318.00; however, City Council may not approve the appeal.

MOTION:

Motion made by Commissioner Lucero, seconded by Vice-Commissioner Lopez AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED TO DENY THE APPLICATION.



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Prior to exiting, Ms. Molina stated she would appeal the commissioners' decision to the City Council.

- Addresses of property HLC commissioners have requested that HLC staff review or investigate and provide a report to the HLC. If no addresses are submitted in advance and listed under this agenda item, commissioners may announce such addresses under this agenda item. Discussion on property announced at this meeting will take place during the next regularly scheduled meeting. August 4, 2014 deadline for HLC members to request for agenda items to be scheduled for the August 18, 2014 meeting. August 18, 2014 deadline for HLC members to request for agenda items to be scheduled for the September 8, 2014 meeting.

FIVE POINTS

Chairman Berchelmann asked Ms. Velázquez if staff would be revisiting the Five Points West area for consideration as a historic district.

Ms. Velázquez responded yes, in the future; she had met with property owners and recommended they try obtaining a National Register nomination due to local restrictions. Commissioners could possibly hear that request near the end of the year.

MAGOFFIN HOME SIGNAGE

Commissioner Moses asked what the status was regarding the Magoffin Home signage.

Ms. Velázquez explained the State of Texas did not want to change their signage, even though staff and the HLC did not think the proposed signage was appropriate. The State said they wanted the signage to be consistent with all historic sites in the State. Ultimately, the State did make some of the changes requested by commissioners such as using a different set of posts for signs and that the signs be painted.

Ms. Velázquez noted the Site Director of the Magoffin Home has invited commissioners to view the construction/renovation of the new Visitor Center.

HLC Staff Report

- Update on Administrative Review Cases since the last HLC meeting for the properties listed on the attachment posted with this agenda.

Chairman Berchelmann asked commissioners if they had any comments and/or questions for staff. *There were none.*

MOTION:

Motion made by Commissioner Lucero, seconded by Commissioner Moses AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED TO APPROVE THE HLC STAFF REPORT AS PRESENTED.



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Other Business – Discussion and Action

5. Reminder to review Chapter 20.20 to discuss revisions in September

Chairman Berchelmann reminded commissioners to review City Code Chapter 20.20, www.municode.com.

Ms. Velázquez noted www.municode.com, City of El Paso, Chapter 20.20; additionally, the item will be placed on the HLC meeting agenda in September.

6. Approval of Regular Meeting Minutes for July 7, 2014.

Chairman Berchelmann asked commissioners if they had any additions, corrections, and/or revisions for staff.

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Commissioner Helm requested staff revise the following:

Ms. Velázquez explained the representative requested the postponement as they have not had time to discuss the changes with the Manhattan Heights Neighborhood Association. Ms. Velázquez clarified ~~that Commissioner Helm was the architect for the multi-purpose room. should recuse himself from discussing and voting as the Commissioner's firm were the architects for the multi-purpose room.~~

Commissioner Helm responded he was not appointed to the commission when the project was presented to the HLC initially. ~~replied he recused himself from the discussion and vote at the time the project was originally placed on the HLC agenda;~~ Furthermore, he does not work for the architectural firm and no longer has a financial interest in the matter.

PUBLIC COMMENT – MR. SARGENT

Commissioner Moses asked if commissioners took any action.

Chairman Berchelmann replied commissioners took no action.

MOTION:

Motion made by Commissioner Moses, seconded by Commissioner Helm AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED TO APPROVE THE JULY 7TH MEETING MINUTES AS REVISED PER COMMISSIONER HELM.

ABSTAIN: Vice-Chairman Lopez and Commissioner Moses

MOTION:

Motion made by Chairman Berchelmann, seconded by Commissioner Moses AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 5:21 P.M.